

PRIMARY HISTORY

The primary education journal of The Historical Association

The Historical Association's Scheme of Work for Primary History



The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain

About this unit:

This unit is based on a visit to Hadrian's Wall. Other Roman sites throughout the country are just as appropriate.

Unit structure

This unit is structured around three sequential history enquiries:

1. When did the Romans invade and why?
2. Did the native Britons welcome or resist them, and why?
3. How did they influence the culture of the people already here?

How this unit links to the national curriculum for primary history

- Key Stage 2 Unit on the Romans
- the successful invasion by Claudius and conquest, including Hadrian's Wall
- British resistance, for example, Boudicca
- developing the children's understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources
- developing the children's Historical interpretation skills
- developing the children's ability to research independently

Enquiry 1: When did the Romans invade and why?

Learning objectives	Key content and suggested lesson ideas	Suggested resources	Assessment
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Romans attempted to invade twice before they were successful on their third attempt why they wanted to control the minerals and exports from this country why we know so little about this period of history – which sources can we use? 	<p>Why did the Romans invade Britain? Examine where, when and how the Romans invaded. Consider the two attempted invasions and why they failed, and why Claudius was then successful. Look at Cassius Dio's accounts and consider how reliable these are.</p> <p>Look at maps of the Roman Empire and explore why they wanted to control these islands – what minerals and commodities did they want to control?</p> <p>Examine Roman armour – preferably a helmet and other soldier's artefacts. Draw and label the drawing to show their understanding of how these items worked so well for the Roman Army.</p>	<p>http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/cassius_dio/60*.html p417</p> <p>www.nms.ac.uk/explore/games/discover-the-romans/discover-the-romans/dress-a-roman-soldier/</p>	<p>Why do we know so little about this era? What evidence can we use?</p>
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> why the Roman Army was so successful in building up the Roman Empire. 	<p>What kind of men could join the Roman Army? Research the requirements for a man trying to join the Roman Army. Refer back to the armour and weapons the soldiers used/carried explored in the previous week.</p> <p>Write a job advert persuading men to apply to be soldiers.</p>	<p>www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/romans/the_roman_army/</p>	<p>Why was the Roman army so successful?</p>
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how we know about life in Roman Britain and especially on Hadrian's Wall 	<p>How do we know about life on Hadrian's Wall? Look at images of the original Vindolanda tablets. Where were they found? In a rubbish tip which was being excavated on the Vindolanda site. Why are they important? They are the only examples of 'postcard' type writing in the UK from this time, and the only example of a woman's handwriting.</p> <p>Read through translations of one example in a small group. Consider: Who wrote it? Who was it to? What does it tell us about life then? What other questions do you now have?</p>	<p>www.vindolanda.com/roman-vindolanda/writing-tablets</p>	<p>Why are these tablets so important?</p>

How will this enquiry help children to make progress in history?

The children will be interpreting both written texts and artefacts to come to conclusions about the Roman Army and the Roman Empire.

How might this enquiry be adapted for children of different ages and different abilities?

- Older children could try to translate parts of Cassius Dio's writing themselves. They could produce their own versions of a visual image of Boudicca based on the description which are then assessed against the same criteria.
- Differing Vindolanda tablets could be used – some are short and straightforward, while others require more reading and more thought.



Enquiry 2:

Did the native Britons welcome or resist the Romans, and why?

Learning objectives	Key content and suggested lesson ideas	Suggested resources	Assessment
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • why some tribes did not welcome the Romans and why some did. • to order the story demonstrating chronological understanding 	<p>Who was Boudicca and why do we remember her? Tell the narrative of who the Iceni were, what happened when Boudicca's husband died and what she decided to do.</p> <p>Children retell the story as a storyboard in chronological order.</p> <p>Consider the tribes in your area of the UK – what can you find out about them? Did they support the Romans or try to resist them? Were they led by men or women?</p>	<p>A map of mainland Britain to show where the Iceni were and where they marched.</p> <p>Local museums may be able to support you with this.</p>	<p>Can the children organise the narrative chronologically? Can the children research their own locality?</p>
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to assess sources for accuracy and bias • to develop their historical interpretation skills 	<p>What did Boudicca really look like? Read through the description of Boudicca by Cassius Dio. Consider how reliable this might be – when was it written? Who wrote it and why? Written 100 years later and by a Roman.</p> <p>Task the children with assessing each of the six images for accuracy – which aspects are correct/incorrect in each picture? Which image is most accurate?</p> <p>Children to produce their own image of Boudicca.</p>	<p>Selection of six images of Boudicca.</p> <p>Description of Boudicca – translation at LXII-2 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/cassius_dio/62*.html</p> <p>Collage materials</p>	<p>Are the children able to correctly assess the images for accuracy? Can they apply this to their own pictures?</p>

How will this enquiry help children to make progress in history?

Children will begin to understand why:

- why the sources we use may not be accurate
- how we must be critical in assessing sources.

How might this enquiry be adapted for children of different ages and different abilities?

- Higher-ability or older children could research independently
- Lower-ability children could have simple statements or pictures to order chronologically, with some statements/images missing.



Enquiry 3: How did the Romans influence the culture of the people already here?

Learning objectives	Key content and suggested lesson ideas	Suggested resources	Assessment
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to interpret ruins to consider the evidence used for an artist's impression of what the Fort may have looked like. 	<p>How did Celtic people live? Investigate with the children how Celtic tribes lived. How were their settlements set up? How did they use space for living? What facilities did they have? What changed when the Romans arrived?</p> <p>Why did the Romans build Hadrian's Wall in the north of England Visit to the Housesteads Fort on Hadrian's Wall.</p> <p>What are the advantages and disadvantages of this site for the wall? – e.g. clear views/lack of access to water.</p> <p>Explore the site – where was the money kept – why?</p> <p>How many soldiers could live here? Measure a soldier's room – how could four men have fitted in this room with their equipment? Bunk beds?</p> <p>Why did a village grow up outside the fort?</p> <p>What evidence did the artist use? Using an artist's impression of part of the site find the place where the artist stood. Investigate what evidence the artist used to base their impression on.</p>	<p>www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zcfygk7 BBC clip on Celtic settlement</p> <p>English Heritage has an excellent collection of artist's impression based on their historical sites.</p>	<p>Are the children able to identify the evidence used?</p>
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to present and communicate their understanding to a variety of audiences. 	<p>Final activity Create a fact sheet about the Romans for another class. The children could work in teams producing a section each.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Produce a fact sheet comparing the similarities and differences between the Romans and the Celtic tribes.</p>	<p>Decide on the most appropriate format for this but it could be produced digitally and emailed to another school that is also near a previously occupied Roman site.</p>	<p>Can the children present their ideas clearly and coherently?</p>

How will this enquiry help children to make progress in history?

Children will begin to appreciate the work of archaeologists and historians and how they use evidence to make deductions about what happened in the past.

How might this enquiry be adapted for children of different ages and different abilities?

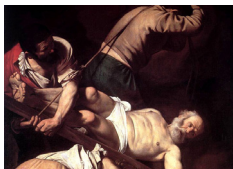
- Higher-ability or older children could produce their own individual fact sheets.
- They could measure their own bedrooms at home and work out how much space they occupy compared with the Roman soldiers and perhaps plot the class results on a graph.





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Resources from the HA



Roman Crime and Punishment

The Romans are known as forward thinkers who were well advanced for their time. But did they manage to conquer crime?

www.history.org.uk/go/RomanCrime



Women in Ancient Greece & Rome

In this series of podcasts Dr Richard Hawley of Royal Holloway, University of London looks at the history of women in Ancient Greece and Rome.

www.history.org.uk/go/WomenGreeceRome



Goths, Huns and the fall of the Roman Empire

In this series of podcasts Professor Peter Heather of King's College London looks at the history of the Goths, the Huns, the division of the Roman Empire and the fall of the Roman Empire.

www.history.org.uk/go/GothsHuns



Ancient Greece & Rome – Similarities and Differences

In this podcast Dr Ursula Rothe & Dr Colin Andrews of the Open University discuss how social, moral and religious life in Rome differed from that of ancient Greece.

www.history.org.uk/go/GreeceRome



The Government of the Roman Empire

The Government of the Roman Empire, as everyone knows, was autocratic, and, like all autocracies, it was 'tempered by assassination' or by military revolution.

www.history.org.uk/go/RomanGovernment



Cleopatra Podcast

Lucy Hughes-Hallet details how fact and legend about Cleopatra had been intertwined through history in a way that reflected the values, perceptions and prejudices of the time.

www.history.org.uk/go/Cleopatra



Roman Britain

An HA Podcast History of Roman Britain featuring Guy de la Bédoyère.

www.history.org.uk/go/RomanBritain

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